

THE CHRIST-GIVEN REST

NO. 2298

A SERMON
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, MARCH 5, 1893
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

*"I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28*

I AM afraid that we have not always noticed the fullness of this promise. Usually the text is preached from as an invitation to the unconverted to come to Christ, and very properly so—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is an invitation to all of you who are laboring after salvation, or are heavy laden with a load of sin, or the burden of your daily cares. You may come—you are bid to come to the Lord Jesus—and He has promised that He will give you rest.

But I must leave you tonight, so far as my sermon is concerned, for my main business will be with those who have come to Christ. After having given the invitation to those who are outside the church of Christ, I pass inside, and I want those who are within to come into sweet communion with their Lord tonight while I dwell upon this very gracious promise, "I will give you rest."

I do not find, in this world, if I promise anything, that anybody ever forgets it. You try any of the societies connected with the Tabernacle—promise them a guinea and see if they do not wait upon you for it. But the curious thing, the wretched thing is, that many of our Lord's promises are neglected by us. We do not wait upon Him to have them fulfilled. After having read the promise, it passes out of our thoughts.

Do not so tonight, I pray you. Here is the promise, "I will give you rest." Let no man here, who has come to Christ, be content tonight unless he gets the rest which the Lord Jesus promises to give. Jesus does not play at promising. Do not play with His promises—be as ready in receiving as He is willing to be in giving.

"I will give you rest." This ought to be a very precious word to all believers. You have come to Christ. He promises to give you rest—be sure that you get it. Do not rest content until you have that perfect peace which He alone can give you, that peace which is here called "rest."

This evening I shall not have much time, but I shall, first, *exhibit this pearl*, this pearl of rest. Secondly, I shall *point you to the hand which gives this pearl*—"I will give you rest." And thirdly, I shall for a few minutes *dwell upon the promise which Jesus makes*—"I will give you rest." It is a positive declaration of our Lord to those who come to Him—"I will give you rest."

I. First, then, let me EXHIBIT THIS PEARL. Mild and soft is its radiance. I call it a pearl, because it is so precious, so blessed a thing. "I will give you rest."

Jesus does not say in what part of the mind He will give rest, for He will give it in every part of the mind. He does not say in reference to what He will give us rest, because He will give us rest in reference to everything. When a promise is general, you may take it in its widest possible meaning. Particulars restrain and restrict, but where there are no particulars, then you have unlimited range. "I will give you rest"—rest about everything, rest at all times, rest in every part of your nature.

This promise includes *rest of the mind, or fixedness of belief*. Just now there is great restlessness concerning what we are to believe, and many persons are much tossed about by the contrary winds that blow. They believe black today, and white tomorrow. Some have fallen into such a condition that they believe nothing, unless, indeed, it should not happen to be in the Bible—and then they will believe it.

But if it is in God's Word, then, of course, they feel it necessary to doubt it. I suppose there is nobody that is not affected to some extent by the tornado of doubt which is sweeping over this island and over the whole world.

Now, is there any child of God here who is perturbed in mind? You say to yourself, "I used to be a simple-minded believer, but I have been worried, tried, and troubled. I think that I shall have to buy some books upon Christian evidences, so as to look into the subject and find out the strongest arguments. Or I shall go and talk to some old Christian and hear what he can say to strengthen me."

Listen, my brother. Your Lord and Master says, "Come unto ME, and I will give you rest." There is a surer intellectual rest to be found in personal communion with Christ than anywhere else. If I get my head into His bosom, none of the philosophers can make it ache. When I once put my finger into the print of the nails, I am no more faithless, but believing.

I believe that living in communion with God is the only sure cure for doubt. Trusting wholly to Christ crucified, resting in His precious blood, and daily seeking to have it applied to the conscience—and then walking in the light as God is in the light, is the surest way to end all those undermining processes which seek to destroy the very foundations of our hope.

Come to Jesus tonight. Come to Jesus at the communion table and enter anew into fellowship with Him, and you will be able to say, "My heart is fixed. O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise." After being with Jesus, half the questions that trouble you will be answered and the other half will not seem worth the asking. After having been with Him, most of your doubts will vanish and the rest will not concern you one jot or tittle. You are His beloved and your heart rests in that blessed fact.

Our Lord next gives *rest of the conscience, or a sense of pardon*. Conscience is a great source of unrest even to the best of men. Conscience does make cowards of us all, even those who are most daring in sin. With the child of God, there is no death of conscience. On the contrary, he who lives to the Lord has a more tender conscience than he ever had before he was saved.

A tender conscience is a great blessing—never try to get rid of it. A morbid conscience may be a torment, but a tender conscience is a benediction—cherish it. Many blind persons read with their fingers, but if the fingers grow hard and callous, and the poor folks cannot feel the raised letters, it is a sad trial for them. We can often read the mind of God by the tender finger of conscience. Take care that your conscience never gets seared, I mean you Christian people. You need to keep your conscience more tender than that of anybody else.

But suppose the conscience becomes restless, what are we to do with it? Brethren, there is no purging the conscience from dead works except by drawing near to Christ again. Have any of you Christian people slipped with your feet? Have you dishonored the sacred name you bear? Be ashamed and be confounded. Who among us has not much to make him ashamed?

But remember that the Christ, who invites the erring sinner before conversion, invites the erring believer after conversion. Come, all you that labor within your spirits and are heavy laden under a sense of your imperfections—come to Christ again tonight. Where you once found rest in the atoning sacrifice, you shall find it again.

Do not let me go a step further till you have done this. Let us practice what I preach as we go along. You with your intellectual tossings, come to my Lord tonight, and see Him on the tree, and look your doubts away. You with the troubled conscience because of your unworthy walk, come to the fountain and be washed anew—and let your conscience find rest.

Supposing those two rests to be enjoyed, there is still a struggle going on, and therefore Christ gives *rest of the soul, or confidence of victory*. The soul, even when it knows its pardon is sure, even when it has settled its doctrinal difficulties, is, nevertheless, engaged in a struggle against the old nature. Do you find that you have completely gained the victory yet? Do you never feel a struggle within your spirit?

I must confess that I have a daily fighting of my better self against the old self, the newborn nature against the old nature, which will, if it can, still keep its hold upon me. "O wretched man that I am! who

shall deliver me from the body of this death?” is my cry as I begin the battle. Yet before I end it, I can say, “Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

If any of you are asking, “How shall I ever get the victory? See how I am tempted. See how weak I am in certain directions, constitutionally weak, and apt to slide. O sir, shall I ever be perfect? Shall I ever master inbred sin?”

Listen, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Jesus will give you rest in the sweet confidence that you will get the victory. He will bruise Satan under your feet. Surely, beloved, there will come a day when there will be no sin left in us. When we shall see the face of our Savior in glory, we shall be like Him—all our doubts will be dead, all our sins will be forgiven—and all our sinful tendencies will be forever destroyed.

*“Then shall I see, and hear, and know
All I desired or wish’d below;”*

and then shall I be rid of all that plagues me and that grieves my God. Come to Jesus tonight, wrestling believer, and have fellowship with Him—and you will have rest even in the midst of the conflict, for you will be sure that you shall ultimately overcome through the blood of the Lamb.

Besides this, Jesus gives *rest of the heart, or satisfaction in love*. Some people appear to have no heart or rather, their heart is a kind of valve made of leather. I have sometimes looked at certain people with great wonder when I have seen how little they have ever been affected. They never have much joy. They never have much sorrow. They seem to have been placed between two millstones and to have had all the juice pressed out of them—they appear to have no heart.

But commend me to a man or woman with a big heart. Some seem to have a most affectionate nature—they must love. These are the people who have the most sorrow, though, mark you, they also have the most wonderful joy. Well, now, it may be that you have loved and you have been deceived, or you have loved and the fond object of your affection has been removed by death. You are here tonight with a sad countenance, you are saying, “What shall I do with this heart of mine? Where shall I love wisely, truly, without the hazard of another broken heart?”

Jesus stands, tonight, invisibly in our midst and He says, “Come unto me, and I will give you rest.” If you will love Him, (and oh, how well He deserves your love!) if you will take Him to be your Companion, your Friend, your Husband, if you will let Him enter into your heart and dwell there—if you will love Him beyond all else, He will give you rest.

And that kind of love which it is allowable to give to the creature, you shall be able to give without fear, when you have once given the heart itself to Him who never fails, never disappoints, and never is untrue. All you who wander with your great loving hearts aching for lack of love, come to my Lord and He will give you rest.

I see you tonight, like the vine with its tendrils, seeking that by which you may climb higher. Come and let your tendrils entwine themselves about my Lord and His sweet words of grace, and you shall get a good hold, and grow and climb even to the skies.

*“Art thou weary? Art thou languid?
Art thou sore distress?
‘Come to me,’ saith One, ‘and coming,
Be at rest.’”*

I will not enlarge upon this point further than to say, as I have already told you, that Christ gives *rest to the entire being, or peace about everything*. Are you troubled, dear child of God, tonight? You ought not to be troubled about anything. “Ah, sir! You do not know my position.” No matter, friend, that I do not know it—HE who bids you come to Him knows it.

“But dear sir, my affliction is peculiar.” Listen—“In all their affliction he was afflicted.” Yours cannot be peculiar, therefore—Jesus must know all about it—and if He knows, it is better than my knowing. “But I have such a heavy cross to carry.” Is it heavier than His? “Ah, sir, but I have so many trials!” Are there more than He can enable you to endure? Come to Him, I pray you.

Now then, if you can, at least for a few minutes, divest yourselves of your cares, your anxieties, your doubts, your fears. There He stands, He of the pierced feet, and the nailed hands, and the crimson side, there He stands in glory, and He bids you come to Him and trust Him. Lay your burdens down at His feet. Why should you carry what He will readily carry for you?

Tell Him all your griefs. Why do you hide them from Him? Should He not know your heart if you are married to Him? Should there be a secret kept away from Him? I am persuaded that I am preaching to you what will be more healing than the balm of Gilead, and sweeter than the sweetest music to lull you into a delightful peace, if you will but listen to this Gospel invitation, and come to Jesus, by a simple act of faith, and by a great resolve of fellowship, for He says, “I will give you rest.”

So much, then, about this pearl, rest.

II. Now I want you to look, for a minute or two, at THE HAND WHICH GIVES THIS PEARL—“I will give you rest.”

If Jesus Christ will give me anything, I will be glad to have it. The least possible gift from Him has a special sanctity about it, because it comes from His dear hand. Your friend gave you a broken sixpence and you have kept it. Your mother gave you (alas! you have no mother now) a little book with her name in it—and you would not sell it for its weight in silver. Now, whatever Jesus gives is a keepsake to His people. They lay it by and they love it. Listen, then—He says, “I will give you rest.”

If He will give me rest, then I know that His giving it *guarantees its genuineness*. I shall have no false peace if Jesus gives it to me. He will never give counterfeit coin to His people. If He gives me peace, it is peace. “When He gives quietness, who then can make trouble?” Beloved, do you not see that the fact that Jesus gives it will make your peace to be to you, beyond all question, the true peace of God which passes all understanding?

Christ’s gift of this rest also proves the *value of the gift*. Jesus does not give us pebble-stones and straws. If He gives us rest, it is rest worth having. Oh, beloved, did you ever enjoy the rest that Jesus gives? Were you ever tossed about with a great trial? Did you ever have a heavy load of care? If you have never had such burdens, I have—I have lain awake at night wondering whatever I should do in certain cases. And at last I have come to the conclusion that I could not do anything and that I must leave all with the Lord.

Did you never wake up, after a little sleep, when you had cast all your care on Christ, and left your troubles with Him, and found yourself perfectly at rest? I have, sometimes, in the midst of great pain, sat up in the night and been afraid to go to sleep for fear I should lose the heavenly calm that I was enjoying. When I have left everything—and God knows that I have more cares to carry than most men—when I have left everything with Him and submitted myself absolutely to His sweet will, and had full fellowship with Christ, I have wondered what I could fret about if I tried. I have said to myself, “There is peace for me in heaven. There is peace for me on earth. There is peace for me in the grave. There is peace for me everywhere.”

It was with my heart, as it was with the stormy sea when Jesus said, “Peace, be still.” “And there was a great calm.” This is the kind of rest that the Lord Jesus Christ gives—rest of the deepest, truest kind—rest which the world cannot give and which the world cannot possibly take away. If He gives rest, it is no second quality rest—it is first-class—it is beyond measure precious if it comes from His hand.

Note again, Jesus says, “I will give you rest.” If His hand gives it, this *ensures your getting it*. Jesus does not say, “I will send you rest.” It might be lost in the post. He does not say, “I will commission an angel to bring you rest.” He might miss his way. It is, “I will give you rest.” Come to Jesus and you shall have rest, out of His own hand put into your hand—nay, put into your heart. You shall certainly get it. There will be no missing it—between the cup and the lip there shall be no slip.

Jesus says, “I will give you rest.” This *ensures your right to it*. When a believer is at peace and rest, if the devil were to meet him, he would ask, “Why are you so quiet?” If you did not answer him, he would say, “What right have you to be at rest? You are a long way off being perfect. Look at the imperfections of yesterday. Why, even in your prayers you sinned!”

“Ah!” says the child of God, “I am not going to dispute with you, Satan. But I have a right to rest, for Jesus gave it to me. I am sure that He did not steal it and I am certain that He gave it to me. My title deeds are clear enough. A free gift through Jesus Christ—who can ever dispute that?” Oh, child of God, enjoy what Jesus gives and be not afraid that anyone will take it from you!

Do you not think that when Jesus says, “I will give you rest,” this should *encourage you to enjoy it*? I believe that some Christians are afraid of being too happy. Do I not recollect when I first knew the Lord? I was as merry as a lark. I felt so glad that my sins were forgiven, I said within myself,—

“I am so glad that Jesus loves me.”

Some good old Christian man shook his head. “Ah!” he said, “the black ox has not trodden on your toes yet.” Well, I had not seen the animal, so I went on rejoicing. Then another said to me, “Some Christians are many years before they come to anything like assurance.” That did a little stagger me, and they told me about the dragons and the giants that there were on the pilgrim’s road. I have not seen any of them yet, but those good people tried to frighten me with them.

Now look here, beloved—there is none too much joy in the world. Do not you go about killing any whenever you see it. Rather try to encourage it, and if you see a young Christian happy in believing, and you do not happen to be as cheerful as he is, do not try and take his joy from him. Leave the black ox alone. The ugly beast will come in due time.

Warn the young believer of all the sin against which he should be on his guard, but do not hold up before him a gloomy view of the Christian life. You, Christian, have a right to perfect peace, and if, between here and heaven, you never have a doubt—if between here and the Eternal City you never have an anxious care—you have a perfect right to that complete serenity. It is, I say, provided for you in the Word of God. If you do not have it and enjoy it, that is your own fault, but there is ample provision made that we should have heaven below as well as heaven above.

Oh, Christian people, if we lived up to our privileges, if we realized the truth of the text, “I will give you rest,” we would commend the Gospel, we should win converts, we should glorify God, we should be vastly more useful ourselves! “I will give you rest,” is an encouragement to the enjoyment of the rest that Jesus gives to those who come unto Him.

And once more, if Christ says, “I will give you rest,” how *it endears Him to us*! If all my rest is what He gives me, shall I not love Him? Oh, if my weary spirit is like Noah’s dove, finding no rest for the sole of its foot till it comes back to Noah, to Christ, and to the ark, shall I not love Him who is my rest? Shall I not prove that love by consecrating to Him the life which He has made so happy? Shall not every step I take seem to ring out music of praise to His name? Shall I not open the gates of the morning with a song and draw the curtains of the night with a new note of thanksgiving? Truly, God has given us this rest.

The Romans said of a certain peace that they enjoyed, “a god has given it to us.” Behold, the Son of God has given us that deep repose which, as believers, we have a right to enjoy and which, I trust, we enjoy tonight. If you do not enjoy it, do not let me go any further until you get it. Come, child of God, I am not simply going to talk about this matter—I want you to practice it. There is the hand, the pierced hand which gives you rest—take the rest from it and enjoy it now—and then kiss that hand with a fervor of deepest reverence, because of this priceless gift which it has bestowed upon you.

III. I close by noticing, in the third place, very briefly, THE PROMISE WHICH JESUS MAKES—“I will give you rest.”

It is a great blessing, sometimes, not to be able to read well. You remember how Mrs. Beecher Stowe, when she wrote “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” pictured Uncle Tom as having to spell all the words over. Now, it is a great blessing if a person is obliged to read the Bible like that. “I—will—give—you—rest.” Every word seems to be emphatic if you will just let it speak. All these bells ring out music, but I have no time to ring them tonight. Will you please listen to their melodious chimes all the week?

“I—will—give—you—rest.” *To this promise there is but one condition.* That we have already fulfilled if we have come to Christ and therefore there is no condition at all attached to the promise, “Come unto me, and I will give you rest.” We have come to Him, unless we are hypocrites, we who are coming to the communion table have first come to Christ. We have really, truly, sincerely, looked unto Him, trusted Him, come to Him, and hidden ourselves in Him. Very well, then, you have fulfilled the one and only condition attached to this promise of the Lord Jesus—and there stands the unconditional promise which applies to you tonight. Let me go over it again, “I—will—give—you—rest.”

This promise is made only to one character—and that character we can easily feel to be our own—“All ye that labour and are heavy laden.” You are the children of God, but you still have to labor. The most of you have to work hard daily and you have also much spiritual labor to serve your Lord, and to keep off the adversary. You labor both for the meat that perishes and for that which endures unto eternal life.

I am afraid that there are none of us who do not at times get heavy laden, especially when we get away from our Lord. Oh, what a load comes on us unless we keep close to Him! Very well, then, if tonight you labor and are laden, come along with you, and Christ will give you rest. I mean my fidgety sister over yonder, who is always fretting—you love the Lord and yet you keep fretting. Come, have done with it, for He says to you, “I will give you rest.” I mean also my timid brother over there who is always afraid of something that never happens. Give up that nonsense. Come along with you, you weary and heavy laden one—Jesus says to you, “I will give you rest.”

I mean that dear brother there, who has a darkness over his mind that he cannot shake off. Come to Jesus and He will give you rest. I mean myself, caring about the church of God and almost broken-hearted, at times, as I see how ill it fares in these evil days. I will come to my Lord tonight, and He will give me rest about that, for after all, I have not to manage His church and guide His affairs. Nay, all responsibilities and all dreads about the future I lay down at Your feet, Thou great Head of the church, Thou great Master of assemblies!

Next, notice that *this promise is most positive and unreserved*—“I will give you rest.” Jesus does not say, “I will give you rest in every respect but one.” No, “Come unto me, and I will give you rest.” And the mercy of it is that *this promise is as sure as ever*. A hundred years ago, a man went to the Lord Jesus with this promise, “I will give you rest,” and the Lord Jesus gave him rest.

Fifty years ago another man went with this promise and he said “Lord, there it is! You said, ‘I will give you rest,’” and the Lord gave him rest. Now tonight take that promise for yourselves. It is just as good as if it had never been fulfilled. I give my neighbor a check—he goes with it to the bank and gets the cash for it. Now suppose the banker returns that check to me—and I go with it to the bank and try to cash it again? “No,” they say, “we have cashed that check once, and that is done with.”

But you may take God’s check and go to the Bank of heaven every day, and every hour in the day, and the check is just as good as if it had never been cashed before. “I will give you rest.” You tried that when you were twenty-one—try it now that you are seventy. When you were forty, in the day of your trouble, you said, “Lord, give me rest.” Now that you are eighty, the promise still stands just as good as ever. God’s promises are not like a bundle of old checks that are done with and sent back to the drawer—they are ever fresh and ever new.

Many of you are coming to the communion table. *This rest is set forth to you in the ordinance.* That table seems to say to you, “I will give you rest.” I shall not ask you to come up to the platform and to kneel down and take the bread from my hands. I shall ask you to sit as much at your ease as ever you

can, because at the Lord's supper, that is the right posture. When Christ broke the bread, the disciples did not even sit, but reclined around the table.

You miss the very spirit of the supper if you come and kneel. It is a festival of rest—and when you come to it, you have nothing to do but to eat and to drink. That is the form in which Christ puts fellowship with Himself, “You shall eat with Me, and you shall drink with Me”—so that, in the ordinance He does by the outward symbol say, “I will give you rest.”

This promise will be completely fulfilled at the last. By and by, by and by, Christ will give us eternal rest. There is a brother to whom I have been accustomed to take off my hat every Sabbath as I passed along. He was one of a goodly number of regular old friends, all along the road, that I could not speak to, but we just bowed and wished each other well as we passed.

Last Sabbath I missed my friend from the place where I generally passed him, and I asked about him, and they told me that he had gone home. There have been many who have gone Home since I was with you before. Well, then, we also may expect to go home by and by, and here is the Master's promise about that matter, “I will give you rest.”

“I will give you rest when the last hour comes. When the time of weakness, and old age, and sickness comes, I will give you rest.” Be not afraid.

*“Death is no more the king of dread,
Since our Immanuel rose;”*

and all the Lord's people may go up to their beds and rejoice to think that there is an end to this life of conflict, and a beginning to the life of victory, for Jesus says, “I will give you rest.”

Oh, the perfect repose, the unutterable bliss, that will be yours and mine before long. I say, “before long,” for in this great congregation I do not doubt that there are several brothers and sisters who will see the King in His beauty before many weeks are gone. I could wish that it were my lot to go first among you, but if it may not be, well, you shall go on a little ahead, my brothers and my sisters, and we will follow in our turn. “Blessed are the dead which die in the LORD from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”

I have done—at least, I mean, I have only begun. I have begun to enjoy the text myself and I hope you have done the same. I must, however, just remind you that, when Jesus says, “I will give you rest,” He does not mean that He will make you lazy. Lazy people cannot rest—they never know what rest means. There must be labor to give us rest.

When Caesar Malan had seventeen days' rest, in which he was charged by the physician not to exercise his mind, or do anything, he wrote fifty-three of the best hymns he had ever written and some of the best in the French tongue. He said that he could not help it—he wrote the hymns because he was resting and they were a part of his rest.

God sometimes makes His servants to be like those birds that rest on the wing. Stretching their broad pinions and taking a mighty flap, they seem to pass mile after mile at every stroke of their wings, resting while flying. Thus you may stretch your pinions of progress, and of holy aspiration, and rise higher and higher, and yet be still at rest. Like the stars that have a deep and profound rest, both by day and night, and yet keep their courses and know no fatigue, so you and I, blessed of God, shall keep our places and serve our God, and shine on, and yet shall rest till we enter into the rest that remains for the people of God.

I wish that it were possible for me to make every child of God here quite restful tonight. I know that I shall fail, but there is a blessed Spirit who can do it. When you are all quite restful, go home and rest. Go home, dear wife, with a restful heart. Perhaps your husband will meet you with an angry word. Be so restful that you will not mind it.

Go home, dear young people, who have to work for your living. Perhaps you will sleep tonight in a room where there are many who will mock you if you kneel down to pray. Get such perfect rest that it

will not matter to you whether they laugh or not. Take no more notice than you do of the grinding of the cab wheels outside this Tabernacle. The Lord can give His people such absolute peace that it would not matter to them if heaven and earth should pass away.

God grant to us that perfect peace! If any of you do not know anything about it, I wish that you did—but there it stands in the text, just as Christ said it, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” God help you to come and take the rest that Jesus gives! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

COLOSSIANS 2:6-17

Verse 6. *As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:*

Do not go away from Him. You have received Him—keep to Him. Whatever He was to you at first, let Him be that to you to the very last. Do not begin with Christ and then go back to self—let it be all Christ from first to last.

7. *Rooted and built up in him,*

Growing in Him. Have your very life, like a tree, rooted in Christ and like a temple, built up in Christ.

7. *And established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.*

Do not forget what you have been taught. Do not reject it—keep to it. He who should learn one system of philosophy, and then unlearn it, and begin another, and then unlearn that, and begin another, would be more likely to turn out a fool than a philosopher. And he who begins to learn the faith in one way, and then tries to learn it in another way, and then attempts to learn it in yet another way, is more likely to be a skeptic than to be a saint.

8. *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*

Plenty of people would spoil you in this way, by teaching you their profound thoughts, their grand inventions, their bright ideas. Beware of all of them.

9. *For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.*

Everything, then, must be in Christ if all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him. Why do you want to go anywhere else for wisdom? What can you find by going elsewhere? “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”

10. *And ye are complete in him,*

You are like vessels filled up to the brim. You are like warriors thoroughly furnished, fully armed for the fight—“Ye are complete in him.”

10-11. *Which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:*

All that the Jew ever had, you have in Christ, only you have the real purification of which His rite was but a symbol.

12. *Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.*

It is only as you are one with Christ that baptism will be to you what He intended, but “buried with him in baptism,” you are dead to all beside and all your life lies in Him.

13. *And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him,*

All your life is in Christ. You are “quickened together with him.”

13. *Having forgiven you all trespasses;*

Your pardon is given to you in Christ. Oh, how full and how free is that forgiveness that comes to you through Christ Jesus!

14-15. *Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

His cross was His triumph. Then He led captivity captive. What more do you want? Your enemy is vanquished, your sins blotted out, your death changed to life, your necessities all supplied. Will you not stay at home with Christ? “Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?” Can you have a better lover than your Lord, a dearer husband than the heavenly Bridegroom? Oh, love the Lord, you His saints. Cling to Him and make much of Him. Let Him be all in all to you.

16. *Let no man, therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:*

Do not let anybody come in and tell you that it is necessary for your salvation that you should abstain from this meat or that drink, that there is a merit in fasting for forty days in Lent, or that you cannot be saved without observing such and such a holy day. Your salvation is in Christ. Keep you to that and add nothing to this one foundation which is once for all laid in Him.

17. *Which are a shadow of things to come;*

That is all that they are—“a shadow of things to come.”

17. *But the body is of Christ.*

Christ is the real one thing needful. Mind that you have the substance, for then you can let the shadows go.

May God bless to us all this brief reading of His Word!

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—422, 722, 808

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